(d) As per the existing practice, efforts are made to solve the water dispute through negotiations with the basin States. In case the efforts do not fructify and if any one of the basin States approaches the Central Government to set up and Tribunal, the same is set up under Inter State Water Disputes Act, 1956 to adjudicate. For resolving such disputes, a Standing Committee on inter-State issues in water resources was set up in April, 1990 under the Chairmanship of Union Minister of Water Resources. There is also a proposal for devising National Policy Guidelines for water sharing.

National Highways

*174. DR. ARUN KUMAR SARMA : Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government propose to strengthen the National Highways Nos. 31, 37 and 52 during the current year;

(b) if so, details of the schemes prepared and scheme-wise allocation of funds made therefor; and

(c) the action taken so far in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN) : (a) to (c). There is no proposal to strengthen NH 31 and 37 during the year 1996-97. However, a provision of Rs. 4.97 crore has been made to strengthen kms. 68, 69, 71 and 76 in Assam in NH 52.

Removal of Blindness at Pre-Natal Stage

*175. SHRI N. DENNIS : Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government are aware of the problems of babies who are born blind;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) the steps taken by the Government to eradicate the disease causing blindnes in children during pre-natal stage?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI SALEEM IQBAL SHERVANI) : (a) and (b) Very few persons are blind by birth. Some of the factors responsible for congential blindness are meternal infections like Rubella, Toxoplomosis, Syphilis during pregnancy, maternal malnutrition and lack of health education of the pregnant mothers.

(c) It is not possible to detect blindness at the pre-natal stage. However, proper ante natal care under Child Survival and Safe Motherhood Programme is provided to all pregnant women to prevent blindness due to Vitamin 'A' deficiency in new born children.

Science Education in Schools

*176. SHRI MOHAN RAWALE : Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state :

(a) the main objectives of the Centrally sponsored scheme for improvement of Science Eduation in Schools;

(b) the funds released and utilised under the scheme during each of the last three years, State-wise;

(c) the extent to which the objectives of the schemes have since been achieved;

(d) whether some States have diversified the funds on items not envisaged in the Scheme; and

(e) if so, the details thereof and the reaction of the Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI S.R. BOMMAI) : (a) The main objective of the Scheme is to improve the quality of science education.

(b) to (e). A statement indicating the statewise release of funds under the scheme during the last three years i.e. 1993-94 to 1995-96, is enclosed. The Scheme is under implementation since 1987-88. All the States have been given assistance under the Scheme. An evaluation of the Scheme was got conducted by NCERT in 1995. The evaluation report indicates that there has been considerable improvement in inculcating scientific abilities and values in students and improving teaching of Science and Mathematics. The schools in which the Scheme was implemented have also shown a better pass percentage. The study also shows that the Scheme is extremely useful and has enormous potential to generate scientific climate in the schools. No instance of diversion/misuse of the funds has come to the notice of the Department of Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development.

STATEMENT

State-wise position of the release of funds by the Government to the states under the Scheme of Improvement of Science Education during the years 1993-94 to 1995-96 and utilization position thereof.

S No	Name of States	Funds released (Rs in lakhs)		
		1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
1	2	3	4	5
1.	Andhra Pradesh	536.40	-	56.72
2.	Assam	-	904.30	-
3.	Goa	-	6.69	-
4.	Haryana	473.29	-	-
5.	Himachal Pradesh	42.14	56.95	-